

**REPORT OF THE
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE AND TRADE**

**Annual Report of the
Workforce Virginia 2000
Advocacy Council**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



SENATE DOCUMENT NO. 29

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
1994**



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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December 15, 1993

TO: The Honorable L. Douglas Wilder, Governor of Virginia
and Members of the General Assembly

House Bill 2214 and Senate Bill 989 requested the Workforce Virginia 2000 Advocacy Council to submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly on progress toward implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000. On behalf of the Advisory Council, we have the honor of submitting herewith the "Annual Report of the Workforce Virginia 2000 Advocacy Council" in response to House Bill 2214 and Senate Bill 989.

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of Karen J. Petersen in cursive.

Karen J. Petersen
Secretary of Education

Handwritten signature of Cathleen A. Magennis in cursive.

Cathleen A. Magennis
Secretary of Commerce and Trade

KJP/CAM/pfc
Enclosure

PREFACE

In 1993, the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council was established in legislation for the purpose of promoting and implementing the recommendations of Governor Wilder's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000. These recommendations focused on better preparing our students to enter the workforce and to continue their education, and on fostering improved skills and productivity of employees in the workplace. First appointed by Governor Wilder in 1991, and then continued by House Bill Number 2214 (HB 2214) and Senate Bill Number 989 (SB 989), the Advocacy Council is requested to report annually to the Governor and General Assembly regarding progress toward implementing the original nine recommendations of the Advisory Committee, as well as on potential program and policy initiatives. This is the first of such reports.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The original report of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000, Partnerships for Excellence: The Virginia Plan for Strengthening the Commonwealth's 21st Century Workforce, contained nine recommendations. Building on a report of the Commission on the University of the 21st Century which outlined changes needed in our colleges and universities in order to prepare for the next century, the nine recommendations of Partnerships for Excellence focus on improving the entire system of education to better prepare our students for the world of work and for continuous, lifelong learning. Those nine recommendations have served as the focal point for reform in education, employment and training programs in the Commonwealth for the last three years.

The ninth recommendation of the report called for establishment of the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council to promote and implement the other eight recommendations. First appointed by Governor Wilder in 1991, and then continued until 1995 by HB 2214 and SB 989, the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council has served the Commonwealth well. Significant progress has been made in implementing the recommendations, but much remains to be done.

As a joint effort between the business and education communities, the Workforce Virginia 2000 initiative has created an awareness of issues and problems facing our economy and our education system, and has fostered communication, cooperation, and a growing momentum for change among Virginia's education, business and public policy leaders. For the first time a common goal and a common vision have been joined by these leaders: a vision of quality education for all students, of high achievement levels second to none in the world, and of continuous education and training opportunities for existing workers which engender productivity for our businesses and high wage opportunities for our citizens.

The following pages provide a brief review of the original recommendations the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council is striving to implement as well as the current status of the recommendations. The subsequent full report more fully outlines the progress seen by the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council and provides greater detail on the work yet remaining.

The Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council strongly endorses continued implementation of the nine recommendations of the original Advisory Committee. The recommendations continue to provide a blueprint for systemic change and improvement needed in order to prepare the Commonwealth's workforce for the 21st century.

The recommendations have stood the test of time, are fully endorsed by the business and education community, and can realistically effect change in the next biennium and beyond. But in order to implement the recommendations for continued progress, all parties involved must continue in their endeavors to raise expectations, explore opportunities, work collaboratively and creatively, and strive to remove barriers to success. The stakes and investments are too great for Virginia to do otherwise.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROGRESS REPORT
ON IMPLEMENTATION OF
WORKFORCE 2000 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation One: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should establish an educational performance standard of excellence which all students are expected to achieve by the tenth grade. This standard should be benchmarked to the highest in the world and be measured through a series of statewide performance evaluations called the Virginia Assessment of Critical Knowledge and Skills."

The Board of Education and the Department of Education have endeavored to establish such performance standards and assessments, but initial efforts were not universally well received. The difficult work of finding a way to define what we want our children to know and to be able to do must continue, as well as our work to find better ways of measuring progress against such standards.

The challenge remains to develop a new set of standards that focuses on high academic achievement and that can be easily understood by parents as well as educators. Developing such standards and the related assessments should continue to be a high priority of the Board and Department of Education.

Recommendation Two: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should assure that virtually all students achieve the competencies required to satisfactorily complete the Virginia Assessment of Critical Knowledge and Skills. Further, pre-school through high school education should refocus upon preparing all Virginia public school graduates to continue their education at college or in technical or apprenticeship programs and to enter the workforce prepared for the demands of a world economy."

There are two aspects to this recommendation: making sure all students achieve the desired level of competency, and providing better school-to-work transition opportunities for more students.

Changing demographics, increased poverty, changing technology and curriculum, and increasing special needs of students all give rise to the need for further professional development of our teachers and administrators. Because of the diverse situations and characteristics of each community, professional development and curriculum development must be driven by local needs.

This is the concept behind funding for three statewide initiatives to ensure that schools have the necessary tools to enable all students to achieve the desired level of competency: Demonstration Schools, the Center for Professional Development, and the state's mathematics and science initiative, Virginia Quality Education in Sciences and Technology (V-QUEST).

Eighteen schools across the Commonwealth are developing or implementing a locally developed educational plan of school reform supported by teachers, parents and administrators. Their successes, and failures, are then used to "demonstrate" school reform for other schools. In addition, a "center" of professional development is located in each of the education regions across the state to provide further support for locally-driven needs for training and development. State funding for both initiatives should be sustained, and incremental funding provided as soon as feasible.

The third initiative, V-QUEST, is a federally supported and nationally recognized initiative to reform mathematics and science education from kindergarten through college. Now entering its second year of a five year contract, V-QUEST is making great strides in creating a model for systemic reform that can be used in other disciplines and in other states. The efforts of V-QUEST should be expanded and integrated with other reform efforts of the Board of Education.

Historically, the emphasis in our schools has been on preparing students for further education, usually in a college or university, with little emphasis made on providing employment skills or on programs that help students make the transition from school to work. Opportunities for students to learn specific skills needed for a trade or occupation have been limited.

Several studies of workforce needs and related skills and training programs have been conducted. As a result of those studies, as well as an opportunity to obtain federal planning funds, an interagency team has submitted an

innovative proposal to the federal government to claim Virginia's share of planning funds. Key components of the proposal include development of regional partnerships and development of a statewide school-to-work structure based on local community ideas and recommendations.

Efforts under the planning grant, as well as other cooperative endeavors across agencies involved in education, employment and training should be strongly supported by the state and by the business community.

Recommendation Three: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should establish local Youth Work-Learning Centers responsible for all young people who have left school before establishing their competencies under the Virginia Assessment of Critical Knowledge and Skills. Under the age of 18, youths who have not satisfactorily completed the Virginia Assessment and who are not enrolled in school should be required to build these competencies through Youth Work-Learning Center programs as a stipulation of initial or continued employment."

Efforts to decrease the dropout rate in Virginia's public schools continue as do efforts to recapture those that are at-risk of dropping out through alternative education programs. A greater than 30 percent decrease in the dropout rate over four years attests to the success of these programs.

Initiatives such as the Project YES programs in 103 school divisions throughout the Commonwealth continue to provide valuable information about the critical elements of effective long-term dropout prevention programs in all schools. This fall the Department of Education is completing the final year of a three-year study of these programs and intends to provide information on the "best practices" identified in the study, including initiatives such as Youth Work-Learning Centers.

At the same time the Department is proposing ways to better coordinate several fund sources and initiatives focused on dropout prevention and dropout recovery. Support for those efforts deemed the most effective should remain a high priority of the Commonwealth.

Recommendation Four: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should create a more comprehensive system of apprenticeship, technical and professional certification, and associate degrees for the majority of Virginia students and adult workers who do not pursue a baccalaureate degree."

Development of the comprehensive system envisioned under this recommendation is going forward on two fronts.

First, within the structure of the school-to-work planning grant discussed under Recommendation Two, a major component will be to provide more extensive technical and professional learning opportunities as well as to develop criteria for "portable" certificates of mastery.

Second, a major issue being pursued under Recommendation Seven, is a comprehensive review of credentials provided by various education and training entities supported by the Commonwealth. Both activities, as well as several initiatives underway within the state, hold much promise for providing a more useful system of education, training and certification.

The Commonwealth should continue to aggressively seek federal and other funds to support these efforts, and should strive to support the statewide initiatives whenever possible.

Recommendation Five: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should create a system for the development and support of partnerships between business and education."

Following a year of implementation, the Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program (VBEPP) was established in legislation by Governor Wilder and the 1993 General Assembly to promote partnerships between education and the private sector. New members of the Advisory Council to the program were appointed by the Governor in September, 1993.

VBEPP provides leadership and advocacy for business-education partnerships in Virginia and serves as a catalyst and broker for formation of dynamic, continuing partnerships among education, business and community groups. VBEPP has become a vital partner in successful efforts to begin

education reform at the local level, and has fostered participation by many groups and individuals not previously considered members in such efforts. At the heart of the program is the desire to increase student performance and, ultimately, prepare Virginia's young people for life and work in the 21st century.

Strongly endorsed by both business and education communities, and with an aggressive agenda being set for the coming year, the Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program should be strongly supported by the Commonwealth to the greatest extent possible.

Recommendation Six: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should adopt a more comprehensive policy on training and employment."

The Workforce Leadership Council, established under Recommendation Seven, is addressing this issue. As discussed under the next recommendation, discussions surrounding such a policy become very complex.

Recommendation Seven: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should establish a single authority with the power to give direction to training and employment activities across various agencies pursuant to the Commonwealth's training and employment policy."

A major success story for the Workforce 2000 effort is establishment of the Workforce Leadership Council. Pulled together as a result of charges of inefficiency and duplication of effort among their education, employment and training programs, eleven agency heads came to realize that the problem was not so much one of duplication as one of lack of cooperation and communication, and the lack of a shared vision. Separate programs were treating various symptoms of a common problem, with little attention being paid to solving the problem in a comprehensive way.

The eleven agency heads and their related cabinet representatives, meeting regularly as the Workforce Leadership Council, are working together to both define that common vision and to develop strategies to make that vision a reality. In bringing together all elements of state government that have a role

and a stake in education, employment and training initiatives, the potential is great for developing a true system of programs and services, without adding layers of bureaucracy and control.

The progress observed in improved awareness and communication across the Workforce Leadership Council agencies and programs has been exceptional. A set of pilot program supported by the Council to actually test out their new working relationships and commitments has been proposed and should be supported for 1994-96. Further, legislation should be introduced to put the Workforce Leadership Council into the Code of Virginia as a formally established and recognized on-going commitment of the Commonwealth.

Recommendation Eight: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should create incentives which encourage employers to develop continuous training programs for their current workers at all levels to assure their continuing development toward world-class standards and to allow the workplace to take full advantage of employees' potential."

As a result of House Joint Resolution 600 and Senate Joint Resolution 330, a set of strategies has been developed for funding consideration in the 1994 legislative session. The strategies include building on the existing resources of The Virginia Productivity Institute at Virginia Tech to establish a public-private partnership called the Virginia Quality Confederation (VQC). The VQC would assist business in promoting more productive, cost-effective business practices, including more training and re-training of existing workers. The VQC will provide information and technical services for those interested in continuous quality improvement. Working with and through existing quality efforts and organizations in Virginia, it will coordinate resources for companies seeking to reorganize their workforces and workplaces in order to create high performance organizations.

Simultaneously, the strategies would establish a network of Virginia Quality Institutes (VQI) utilizing resources of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) to provide actual training needed by employees. The VQI initiative envisions a network of some 25 training and resource centers in communities across the state. These centers would provide training for small and medium sized companies in the principles of continuous quality improvement and high performance work organizations. The program would

be developed over the next six years as a means of increasing the rate of performance improvement in manufacturing and service industries.

This dual approach seeks to address the needs of small and medium-sized companies as well as manufacturing defense contractors and subcontractors that will need targeted assistance as the national defense system continues to be downsized. The Commonwealth should support establishment of these initiatives as an economic development tool as soon as possible.

Recommendation Nine: "The Governor of Virginia should appoint an Advisory Council on Workforce Virginia 2000 to advocate these recommendations and to report to him on its progress."

During the 1993 legislative session, the General Assembly passed House Bill 2214 and Senate Bill 989, to establish the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council for two years. The Advocacy Council is to submit an annual progress report to the Governor and General Assembly each year.

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000
ADVOCACY COUNCIL**

**Progress Toward Implementation
of Workforce Virginia 2000**

INTRODUCTION

The educational attainment of Virginia's students compares very favorably with that of students in the rest of the United States. Students' high school test scores and graduation rates are among the highest in the South. Dropout rates have declined in each of the last four years. The availability of a well-educated workforce has enabled Virginia to attract and retain a great diversity of business. However, global competition is fierce. Today's economic realities dictate that the Commonwealth must possess a globally competitive workforce that is capable of contributing to high performance organizations, something we do not yet have.

In order to ensure a more prosperous future, the Commonwealth must improve productivity, quality, and its overall competitive position. This cannot be achieved simply by using better tools that even low wage countries can now access. The first two industrial revolutions were driven by the steam engine and the electric motor, respectively. These innovations boosted productivity, quality, and living standards dramatically, and significantly altered work environments. According to the Report of the Commission of the Skills of the American Workplace, the key to Virginia's success in the future can be found in the third industrial revolution now occurring in the world: a revolution that is computer driven, centered on high speed communication, and one in which universal education yields high performance work organizations.

In response to these challenges, the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce 2000 carefully developed an innovative plan to strengthen the Commonwealth's 21st Century workforce in 1991. Partnerships for Excellence: The Virginia Plan for Strengthening the Commonwealth's 21st Century Workforce, the summary report of the Committee, has served as the focal point for reform in education, employment and training programs in the Commonwealth for the last three years. Significant progress has been made in implementing those recommendations, but much remains to be done.

In moving forward on the recommendations, the Commonwealth of Virginia is endeavoring to provide educational opportunities to all of its citizens, to prepare them for the complex and ever-changing world of work, and to encourage lifelong learning. The goal of all of the Commonwealth's education,

employment and training programs, when placed in composite, is to create a "seamless web" of alternative education and training opportunities and choices for all citizens, as it strives to remove barriers to access and success.

In order to lead this effort, in December 1991, Governor L. Douglas Wilder announced the first appointments to the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council. The charge to the Advocacy Council was to implement and actively promote at the local, state, regional, and national levels the nine recommendations made by the Workforce 2000 Advisory Council to "facilitate cooperation between the business and education communities in bringing job skills instruction and workforce preparedness into Virginia's public education and higher education classrooms".

The Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council is now completing its second year. As a joint effort between the business and education communities, the Workforce Virginia 2000 effort has created an awareness of issues and problems facing our economy and our education system, and has fostered communication, cooperation and a growing momentum for change among Virginia's education, business and public policy leaders.

For the first time a common goal and a common vision has been created among these leaders: a vision of quality education for all students, with high achievement levels second to none in the world, and continuous education and training opportunities for existing workers which engender productivity and high wage opportunities for our citizens.

Following is a full report of the progress seen by the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council as well as recommendations for further progress.

**PROGRESS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION
OF WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000
BY RECOMMENDATION**

Recommendation One: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should establish an educational performance standard of excellence which all students are expected to achieve by the tenth grade. This standard should be benchmarked to the highest in the world and be measured through a series of statewide performance evaluations called the Virginia Assessment of Critical Knowledge and Skills."

On February 25, 1993, the Virginia Board of Education adopted a vision statement, "Virginia's Vision for a World Class Education." This document is guiding the Board's action to implement the recommendations of the Workforce 2000 report.

Five of the six goals of the World Class Education Initiative have been widely supported. The goals include having schools focus on high expectations for all students; holding schools accountable for student achievement of these high expectations; getting parents more involved in schools; meeting the individual needs of each student, and promoting equity in educational opportunities and addressing disparities.

The sixth goal, the cornerstone goal, is related to the achievements of students and the use of standards commonly referred to as the Common Core of Learning (CCL). For a variety of reasons, the last goal became the subject of much controversy and criticism. Some critics did not agree with the concept of setting performance standards; others did not agree with the set of standards being developed; still others did not see the need for change.

On September 15, 1993, Governor Wilder instructed the Department of Education to withdraw the Common Core of Learning initiative for Virginia's schools. Subsequently, the Board of Education approved a resolution withdrawing the Common Core of Learning and reaffirming its commitment to improve the educational performance of Virginia's children. All work related to the CCL on the development of curriculum content and student performance

standards has been terminated, as have been all assessment activities tied to the Common Core of Learning.

The Board of Education is still committed to its Vision Statement which has as its goal the establishment of a World Class System of Education by the Year 2000. Although implementation of the one goal was not been widely successful, the original concepts of the six goals remain the foundation of the Commonwealth's education reform effort for kindergarten through the tenth grade.

The challenge remains to develop a new set of standards that focuses on high academic achievement and that can be easily understood by parents as well as educators. Developing such standards and the related assessments should continue to be a high priority of the Board and Department of Education.

Recommendation Two: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should assure that virtually all students achieve the competencies required to satisfactorily complete the Virginia Assessment of Critical Knowledge and Skills. Further, pre-school through high school education should refocus upon preparing all Virginia public school graduates to continue their education at college or in technical or apprenticeship programs and to enter the workforce prepared for the demands of a world economy."

There are two aspects to this recommendation: making sure all students achieve the desired level of competency, and providing better school-to-work transition opportunities for more students.

Changing demographics, increased poverty, changing technology and curriculum, and increasing special needs of students all give rise to the need for further professional development of our teachers and administrators. Because of the diverse situations and characteristics of each community, professional development and curriculum development must be driven by local needs.

This is the concept behind funding for three statewide initiatives to ensure that schools have the necessary tools to enable all students to achieve the desired level of competency: Demonstration Schools, the Center for

Professional Development, and the state's mathematics and science initiative, Virginia Quality Education in Sciences and Technology (V-QUEST).

Currently, there are fifteen Early Childhood Demonstration Schools and three Pre-and Early Adolescent Demonstration Schools that have been funded for the 1993-94 school year. These schools are developing or implementing a locally developed educational plan of school reform. Each plan is locally approved by teachers, parents, and administrators. Their successes, and their failures, are then used to "demonstrate" school reform for other schools. School superintendents, principals and teachers strongly endorse this concept of effectively encouraging and supporting education reform at the school- and community-based level.

Based on the same concept of Demonstration Schools, the Center for Professional Development was created to support local school initiatives for education reform. With all funds distributed to a "center" of professional development located in each of the eight education regions across the state, planning funds and implementation grants for training are provided to further support locally-driven needs for training and development of teachers, parents and administrators.

The third initiative, V-QUEST, is a federally supported and nationally recognized initiative to reform mathematics and science education from kindergarten through college. Now entering its second year of a five year contract, V-QUEST is making great strides in creating a model for systemic reform that can be used in other disciplines and in other states.

Funded through a five-year \$9.6 million contract from the National Science Foundation, V-QUEST is the Commonwealth's primary effort to reform mathematics and science education from kindergarten through college (K-14) in Virginia. The initiative is designed to model implementation of World Class Education in science and mathematics.

Components of the initiative are designed to support the following: the concept of school-based mathematics and science lead teachers for each elementary and middle school; development of new models for college courses that serve as the foundation for our new teachers as well as new models of instruction for continued professional development; design of standards for new instructional materials to support new teaching methods and curriculum;

increasing local educational leadership and administrative support; increasing community awareness and support; spreading the understanding and use of technology; and improving ways of measuring the progress of students in mathematics and science.

Major achievements of V-QUEST include:

1. The Lead Teacher component is designed to train school-based mathematics and science lead teachers for each elementary and middle school. To-date, 270 teachers in grades K-8, as well as 135 of their principals, have been involved in the V-QUEST Lead Teacher program. The program includes a two-week summer institute (principals participate for two days), monthly follow-ups, and a one-week follow-up institute (principals participate for one day). In all, 135 schools and 27 school divisions, as well as one private school, have been represented in the Lead Teacher Institutes. Thirty teachers, representing a total of 19 school divisions, in grades 5-8, also took part in a one-week V-QUEST Assessment Institute and are now developing appropriate mathematics and science assessments within their classrooms.
2. On a national level, V-QUEST has convened instructional materials publishers from across the country along with state school administrators from an initial 12 states to form a first-ever collaborative effort to develop criteria for exemplary instructional materials. They are developing the first draft of a national consensus position paper describing the use of exemplary mathematics and science materials as well. The work of this group is laying the groundwork for major shift in the way instructional materials are developed, selected and used across the country.
3. Education reform cannot occur solely within the confines of school buildings. The way in which teachers are initially prepared and receive subsequent training must change also. The Pre-Service/In-Service component of V-QUEST is inviting and supporting such change. Three regional collaborations

between universities, community colleges, and local school divisions have been funded with four-year awards to develop new approaches to undergraduate courses (freshman and sophomore level) and new in-service teacher training models. The collaborations, each eligible for first year funding of up to \$275,000, were recommended in a review of proposals by a panel of seven nationally-recognized experts. Currently, the collaborations involve three of the four-year universities, four community colleges, and eight local school divisions; however, negotiations are proceeding for greater involvement of other institutions and schools.

4. In terms of integrating technology into the classroom, V-QUEST is moving forward on a number of fronts. All component plans are designed to foster and encourage the use of technology and consideration is being given to developing statewide technology institutes. Technology was one of five major themes for the Lead Teacher Institutes, and was included in the Assessment Institute. In addition, V-QUEST has been involved in, supported, and/or initiated several technology-related projects, such as the first full-motion, interactive telecommunications project for Virginia's public schools; the Architectural Renaissance project to develop plans for future school design; the free "Utilizing Technology to Enhance Learning" seminars offered through a partnership with the Regional Academic Governor's Schools; and others.
5. Community-based leadership and administrative support must be evident in order for education reform to occur and to be sustained. Three school divisions have been selected as the nuclei around which V-QUEST pilot Community Action Regional Councils will be formed. The councils will build on existing local networks to disseminate information on successful practices and encourage reform.

Several issues, including increasing the participation of underrepresented populations in the mathematics and sciences and ensuring the appropriate integration of technology in the education programs, cut across all seven of the

V-QUEST components. V-QUEST's Equity and Access Team works with all components to consider and develop mechanisms to ensure equity and access for all students are addressed by V-QUEST activities. In addition, V-QUEST is working with the Virginia Community College System to develop a minority faculty recruitment project.

The comprehensive and systemic nature of V-QUEST have placed Virginia in the national forefront as a model in this critical area. Careful attention must be afforded to ensure that all of the components of the project come together for maximum efficiency and that the creative and diligent efforts provided by the leadership team of the project are maximized. The broad mission of systemic reform in math and science education is a complex process and must be accomplished in concert with other initiatives of the Board of Education. The opportunity and the resources available to V-QUEST must continue to be maximized and leveraged whenever possible.

Historically the emphasis in our schools has been on preparing students for further education, usually in a college or university, with little emphasis made on providing employment skills or on programs that help students make the transition from school to work. Opportunities for students to learn specific skills needed for a trade or occupation have been limited.

Several major studies of workforce needs have been completed. House Document 18, Study of Preparing a Skilled Workforce for the 21st Century (1993), concluded that Virginia students will not be prepared for the work place of the 21st century unless they achieve certain critical workplace competencies. These competencies were identified by the study and strategies for achieving these competencies were recommended.

In response to subsequent legislation (Senate Joint Resolution 183), an interagency team was assembled to examine the development and establishment of school-to-work transition programs within the Commonwealth and to report findings and recommendations for future programs. Preliminary findings of the study reveal that although Virginia has many promising programs, most lack one or more of the three essential elements of school-to-work transition programs: work-based learning, school-based learning, and connecting activities.

The national School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1993, introduced by President Clinton in August 1993, and pending congressional action, will create

a national framework within which all states can create school-to-work opportunities that integrate work-based and school-based learning, occupational and academic learning, and secondary and post-secondary education. Such programs will result in students attaining a high school diploma, a portable skills certificate, and, if appropriate, post-secondary education. Federal funding is currently available for demonstration grants to assist states in creating the framework to develop statewide systems. Virginia is participating in this opportunity, and an innovative grant proposal has been submitted. Key components of the proposal include development of regional partnerships and a statewide school-to-work structure based on local community ideas and recommendations. Planning funds will be available for nine months, and if approved by Congress, funding will be available in federal fiscal year 1995 for competitively-reviewed, five-year implementation grants.

As one example of a new school-to-work transition pilot, Career Pathways, was launched in September 1993. This program is jointly sponsored by the Richmond City and Charles City County school systems, James River Corporation, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor and Industry, the Virginia Employment Commission, and the Virginia office of the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training. More than 20 employers are participating in this new school-to-work program aimed at serving all students. Career Pathways incorporates a strong foundation for career exploration and awareness, mentorships, internships and job shadowing, and paid work experiences. Approximately 600 students from three high schools are participating in the career exploration phase of the pilot this fall. Five additional school systems are considering adoption of Career Pathways.

Additionally, several legislative commissions are deliberating on key recommendations relating to assuring students are able to learn when they enter school. Early interventions may include expanded day care emphasis during the pre-school years, reduced class size in grades K-3 in high need school divisions, enhanced school-wide Chapter 1 projects, and targeted funding for integrating instructional technology into high need school divisions.

There is a great need for the Commonwealth to pursue distance learning initiatives that enhance educational opportunities for rural and disparate areas of Virginia. An exciting initiative in this area is Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Company's proposal to deploy a state-of-the-art, fiber optic,

interactive video distance learning network to link public schools and state supported colleges throughout C&P service areas in Virginia. C&P has created a special fund to help schools pay for the classroom equipment needed for the network. The Company plans to provide over \$7 million over the next seven years to implement the project. In September 1993, C&P launched a distance learning demonstration project in southwest Virginia's Lee County. The network will use fiber optics to link two high schools in the county with Mountain Empire Community College in Big Stone Gap.

This recommendation holds tremendous potential for the Commonwealth, yet will require a great deal of continued effort. Efforts under the school-to-work planning grant, as well as other cooperative endeavors across agencies involved in education, employment and training should be strongly supported by the state and by the business community.

Recommendation Three: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should establish local Youth Work-Learning Centers responsible for all young people who have left school before establishing their competencies under the Virginia Assessment of Critical Knowledge and Skills. Under the age of 18, youths who have not satisfactorily completed the Virginia Assessment and who are not enrolled in school should be required to build these competencies through Youth Work-Learning Center programs as a stipulation of initial or continued employment."

Efforts to decrease the dropout rate in Virginia's public schools continue as do efforts to recapture those that are at-risk of dropping out through alternative education programs. A greater than 30 percent decrease in the dropout rate over four years attests to the success of these programs.

Initiatives such as the Project YES programs in 103 school divisions throughout the Commonwealth continue to provide valuable information about the critical elements of effective long-term dropout prevention programs in all schools. This fall the Department of Education is completing the final year of a three-year study of these programs and intends to provide information on the "best practices" identified in the study, including initiatives such as Youth Work-Learning Centers.

The 1993 General Assembly approved an additional dropout prevention and retrieval program entitled the Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program. This program targets students at risk of dropping out of school and students whose financial need might limit their ability to attend college. The purpose of the program is to reduce the dropout rate, to increase the graduation rate, and to increase the number of students pursuing post-secondary education/training options.

The program was funded to establish pilot projects in grades 6 through 12. Thirty-three proposals were received and eleven school divisions were funded for the 1993-94 school year. These projects reflect a wide range of approaches to dropout prevention, dropout retrieval, and post-secondary training for students who historically have lacked the preparation for life after high school. Among the 11 funded grants was a \$75,000 award to Greensville County Schools to create a dropout retrieval program to serve young adults ages 12 to 15 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the evenings. This model program is patterned after the Youth Work-Learning Centers envisioned in the Workforce 2000 report. It is hoped that the lessons learned from this and other programs can be used to develop statewide models for the future.

The establishment of a comprehensive system of statewide Youth Work-Learning Centers has not yet been realized. While the Department is proposing ways to better coordinate several fund sources and initiatives focused on dropout prevention and dropout recovery, including the concept of Youth Work-Learning Centers, the Commonwealth must begin to address this need on a more systemic basis. Support for these efforts deemed the most effective should remain a top priority for the Commonwealth.

Recommendation Four: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should create a more comprehensive system of apprenticeship, technical and professional certification, and associate degrees for the majority of Virginia students and adult workers who do not pursue a baccalaureate degree."

The aforementioned School-to-Work Opportunities Act will provide a national framework within all states to create school-to-work opportunities. In response to federal initiatives through the Act now pending before Congress, the state has already submitted a request for planning funds to the United States

Departments of Education and Labor. The purpose of this grant will be to obtain funding for planning a statewide school-to-work system that would provide the framework for a unified state school-to-work plan. The state system would provide for local experimentation and flexibility while incorporating basic components of the federal program: the integration of work-based and school based learning; the integration of occupational and academic learning; and the linkage of secondary and post-secondary education. School to work opportunities created under the federal program will result in students attaining a portable skills certificate in addition to appropriate academic credentials. The progress of the Workforce 2000 initiative strategically positions the Commonwealth to capitalize on this new federal priority.

Additionally, the formation of the Workforce Leadership Council under Recommendation Seven will provide a comprehensive system of training and information for students and adults who do not wish to pursue a baccalaureate degree. The Council also will conduct a comprehensive review of credentials provided by various education and training entities within the Commonwealth.

Another example of school divisions experimenting with innovative school-to-work programs is found in the Hampton Roads region. These schools, in conjunction with community colleges and other community agencies, are developing an innovative community-based learning center that will provide youth apprenticeship, technical and professional, and associate degree training and certification programs.

The Commonwealth's community colleges also have aggressively and creatively implemented the federally funded Tech Prep Program which enhances articulation between high school and the community colleges. A number of the programs serve as national Tech Prep models.

In addition, the Virginia Community College System is in the process of developing an innovative Retraining Initiative to meet the retraining needs of the citizens of the Commonwealth. Particular attention will be given to retraining workers displaced as a result of military cutbacks and defense conversions.

The federal school-to-work program holds significant promise for the future, as do the various individual initiatives. The Commonwealth should continue to aggressively seek federal and other funds to support these programs

and to prepare all agencies represented on the Workforce Leadership Council to respond collaboratively, quickly, and creatively.

Recommendation Five: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should create a system for the development and support of partnerships between business and education."

Following a year of implementation, the Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program (VBEPP) was established in legislation by Governor Wilder and the 1993 General Assembly to promote partnerships between education and the private sector. New members of the Advisory Council to the program were appointed by the Governor in September 1993.

VBEPP provides leadership and advocacy for business-education partnerships in Virginia and serves as a catalyst and broker for formation of dynamic, continuing partnerships among education, business and community groups. VBEPP has become a vital partner in successful efforts to begin education reform at the local level, and has fostered participation by many groups and individuals not previously considered members in such efforts. At the heart of the program is the desire to increase student performance and, ultimately, prepare Virginia's young people for life and work in the 21st century.

VBEPP is challenging partnerships to take risks, set high expectations, and produce results, rather than be content with partnerships as "feel good exercises between business and education communities". The first set of partnership standards in the country, *Standards of Excellence*, has been developed as guiding principles for effective results-oriented partnerships.

Services that have been provided by VBEPP include distribution of hundreds of brochures and other resource materials, including the new *Standards*, serving as a networking coordinator among new and established partnership programs, providing training sessions and workshop presentations, and making speeches, all to promote effective partnership planning and implementation.

A capstone event for the year's activities was the Governor's Business-Education Conference, "*Working for Results*" which provided over twenty-five workshops and two keynote speakers on partnership activities. The two days'

events also included the first ever presentation of the *Governor's Awards for Excellence* which honored outstanding partnership efforts across the state.

Although VBEPP has experienced a significant level of success in a very short period of time, plans are now being formulated to seize the momentum created by the programs and take business education partnerships in Virginia to a higher level of excellence. The VBEPP Advisory Council, in the process of setting its agenda for the next year, is considering the following objectives:

Outreach -- VBEPP should continue to focus on its primary mission of increasing student performance through the promotion of partnerships between education, business, and community groups. Improving and expanding education, training and information dissemination should be of primary importance, with additional focus put on establishing statewide and regional networks, widening the scope of relationships with the business community and other community groups, and developing an improved set of materials and resources to support partnership activities.

Resource Development -- VBEPP should identify goals for resource development and conduct an in-depth examination of options for achieving those goals, including consideration of establishing a funding philosophy. This review should consider such options as establishing a public-private foundation to support a challenge grants program, charging for services, and corporate sponsorship.

Recognition -- VBEPP should continue to recognize outstanding partnerships in the Commonwealth. This should include continuation of the Governor's Awards Program.

Recommendation Six: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should adopt a more comprehensive policy on training and employment."

The Workforce Leadership Council, established under Recommendation Seven, is addressing this issue. As discussed under the next recommendation, discussions surrounding such a policy become very complex.

Recommendation Seven: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should establish a single authority with the power to give direction to training and employment activities across various agencies pursuant to the Commonwealth's training and employment policy."

A major success story for the Workforce 2000 effort is establishment of the Workforce Leadership Council. Pulled together as a result of charges of inefficiency and duplication of effort among their education, employment and training programs, eleven agency heads came to realize that the problem was not so much one of duplication as one of lack of cooperation and communication, and the lack of a shared vision. Separate programs were treating various symptoms of a common problem, with little attention being paid to solving the problem in a comprehensive way.

The eleven agency heads, meeting regularly as the Workforce Leadership Council, are working together to both define that common vision and to develop strategies to make that vision a reality. In bringing together all elements of state government that have a role and a stake in education, employment and training initiatives, the potential is great for developing a true system of programs and services, without adding layers of bureaucracy and control.

The Workforce Leadership Council is focusing its work on several key issues, including: welfare reform; economic development/workforce training; inmate education and training; business productivity; world class education; streamlining the delivery of state and federal education, employment and training programs; and the aging population.

The progress observed in improved awareness and communication across the Workforce Leadership Council agencies and programs has been exceptional. A set of pilot program supported by the Council to actually test out their new working relationships and commitments has been proposed and should be supported for 1994-96. Further, legislation should be introduced to put the Workforce Leadership Council into the Code of Virginia as a formally established and recognized on-going commitment of the Commonwealth.

Recommendation Eight: "The Commonwealth of Virginia should create incentives which encourage employers to develop continuous training programs for their current workers at all levels to assure their continuing development toward world-class standards and to allow the workplace to take full advantage of employees' potential."

As a result of House Joint Resolution 600 and Senate Joint Resolution 330, a set of strategies has been developed for funding consideration in the 1994 legislative session. The strategies include consideration of tax credit incentives for small- and medium-sized businesses to invest in their human resources; providing general fund support to better utilize the community colleges for training and retraining of the existing workforce; and to build on the resources of the Virginia Productivity Institute at Virginia Tech to establish a public-private partnership call the Virginia Quality Confederation (VQC). The VQC would assist business in promoting more productive, cost-effective business practices, including more training and re-training of existing workers. The VQC will provide information and technical services for those interested in continuous quality improvement. Working with and through existing quality efforts and organizations in Virginia, it will coordinate resources for companies seeking to reorganize their workforces and workplaces in order to create high performance organizations.

Simultaneously, the strategies would establish a network of Virginia Quality Institutes (VQI) utilizing resources of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) to provide actual training needed by employees. The VQI initiative envisions a network of some 25 training and resource centers in communities across the state. These centers would provide training for small and medium sized companies in the principles of continuous quality improvement and high performance work organizations. The program would be developed over the next six years as a means of increasing the rate of performance improvement in manufacturing and service industries.

This dual approach seeks to address the needs of small and medium-sized companies as well as manufacturing defense contractors and subcontractors that will need targeted assistance as the national defense system continues to be downsized. If funded, these programs will significantly advance the adoption of efficient management and continuous quality improvement practices in Virginia's workplaces and ensure its long-term ability to compete nationally and internationally.

These initiatives hold tremendous potential to position Virginia as one of the workforce quality and productivity leaders in the country. These endeavors will assist Virginia and the United States to regain their competitive edge in the third industrial revolution and in an ever-changing global economy. Great care must be afforded in the development of these initiatives to ensure that attention is not focused just on results but on the conditions, systems, and processes that lead to quality results. Furthermore, it must be clearly emphasized that quality training and education is not the sole domain of the VQC at Virginia Tech and the VQI at the Commonwealth's Community Colleges. Instead, these endeavors must be regarded as the vanguard of a quality and productivity revolution across the entire Commonwealth. Serious funding consideration should be afforded to these important initiatives.

Recommendation Nine: "The Governor of Virginia should appoint an Advisory Council on Workforce Virginia 2000 to advocate these recommendations and to report to him on its progress."

The General Assembly passed HB 2214 and SB 989, both of which established the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council. The legislation continues the existing council and requests a quarterly report to the Secretaries of Economic Development and Education and an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly.

SUMMARY

The Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council strongly endorses continued implementation of the nine recommendations of the original Advisory Committee. The recommendations continue to provide a blueprint for systemic change and improvement needed in order to prepare the Commonwealth's workforce for the 21st century.

The recommendations have stood the test of time, are fully endorsed by the business and education community, and can realistically effect change in the next biennium and beyond. But in order to implement the recommendations for continued progress, all parties involved must continue in their endeavors to raise expectations, explore opportunities, work collaboratively and creatively, and strive to remove barriers to success.

As is evidenced by this report much progress has been made in many areas. However, now is the time to recommit to surmounting the remaining challenges before the Commonwealth. The stakes and investments are too great for Virginia to do otherwise.

APPENDIX

1993 SESSION
VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - CHAPTER 726

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 2.1-1.8 and 9-6.23 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 2.1 a chapter numbered 10.4, consisting of sections numbered 2.1-116.18 and 2.1-116.19, relating to the establishment of the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council.

[H 2214]

Approved **MAR 28 1993**

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 2.1-1.8 and 9-6.23 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 2.1 a chapter numbered 10.4, consisting of sections numbered 2.1-116.18 and 2.1-116.19, as follows:

§ 2.1-1.8. Temporary collegial bodies.—There shall be, in addition to such others as may be established by law, the following temporary collegial ~~body~~ *bodies* established within the executive branch for a specified purpose and specified period of time:

Food and Nutrition, Advisory Commission to the Program on
Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council.

CHAPTER 10.4.

WORKFORCE 2000 ADVOCACY COUNCIL.

§ 2.1-116.18. *Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council established; membership; terms.*—There is hereby established a Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council for the purpose of promoting and implementing the recommendations of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000. The Advocacy Council shall be composed of twenty-one members to be appointed by the Governor as follows: one member of the House of Delegates and one member of the Senate; one member of the Board of Education; and eighteen members representing business, industry, education, and employees, including one community college president, one president of a four-year institution of higher education, one school superintendent, one public school teacher, one school board member, and at least five representatives of private business and industry. Appointed members shall be chosen from among residents across the Commonwealth and shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Secretaries of Education, Economic Development, and Health and Human Resources, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Chairmen of the House Committees on Education, Appropriations, and Finance and the Senate Committees on Education and Health and Finance shall serve as *ex officio* members of the Advocacy Council. The Governor shall select a chairman and vice chairman from among the Council members.

§ 2.1-116.19. *Meetings; duties and responsibilities.*—The Advocacy Council shall meet quarterly to review and promote the implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000 and to act as a clearinghouse for information on public education and workforce training issues. The Advocacy Council shall report quarterly to the Secretaries of Education and Economic Development and annually to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding these recommendations and potential program and policy initiatives.

§ 9-6.23. *Prohibition against service by legislators on boards and commissions within the executive branch.*—Members of the General Assembly shall be ineligible to serve on boards and commissions within the executive branch which are responsible for administering programs established by the General Assembly. Such prohibition shall not extend to boards and commissions engaged solely in policy studies or commemorative activities. If any law directs the appointment of any member of the General Assembly to a board or commission in the executive branch which is responsible for administering programs established by the General Assembly, such portion of such law shall be void, and the Governor shall appoint another person from the Commonwealth at large to fill such a position. The provisions of this section shall not apply, however, to members of the Board for Branch Pilots, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 54.1-901; to members of the Commission on VASAP, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 18.2-271.2; to members of the Board on Veterans' Affairs, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 2.1-741; to members of the Council on Indians, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 9-138.1; to members of the Board of Trustees of the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, who shall be appointed as provided in § 23-231.3; to members of the Maternal and Child Health Council, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 9-312; or to members of the Virginia Interagency Coordinating Council who shall be appointed as provided in § 2.1-750; or to members of the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council, who shall be appointed as provided in § 2.1-116.18

2. That the provisions of this act shall expire on July 1, 1995.

1993 SESSION

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - CHAPTER 751

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 2.1-1.8 and 9-6.23 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 2.1 a chapter numbered 10.4, consisting of sections numbered 2.1-116.18 and 2.1-116.19, relating to the establishment of the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council.

[S 989]

Approved MAR 28 1993

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 2.1-1.8 and 9-6.23 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 2.1 a chapter numbered 10.4, consisting of sections numbered 2.1-116.18 and 2.1-116.19, as follows:

§ 2.1-1.8. Temporary collegial bodies.—There shall be, in addition to such others as may be established by law, the following temporary collegial ~~body~~ *bodies* established within the executive branch for a specified purpose and specified period of time:

Food and Nutrition, Advisory Commission to the Program on Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council.

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§ 2.1-116.19. Meetings; duties and responsibilities.—The Advocacy Council shall meet quarterly to review and promote the implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000 and to act as a clearinghouse for information on public education and workforce training issues. The Advocacy Council shall report quarterly to the Secretaries of Education and Economic Development and annually to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding these recommendations and potential program and policy initiatives.

§ 9-6.23. Prohibition against service by legislators on boards and commissions within the executive branch.—Members of the General Assembly shall be ineligible to serve on boards and commissions within the executive branch which are responsible for administering programs established by the General Assembly. Such prohibition shall not extend to boards and commissions engaged solely in policy studies or commemorative activities. If any law directs the appointment of any member of the General Assembly to a board or commission in the executive branch which is responsible for administering programs established by the General Assembly, such portion of such law shall be void, and the Governor shall appoint another person from the Commonwealth at large to fill such a position. The provisions of this section shall not apply, however, to members of the Board for Branch Pilots, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 54.1-901; to members of the Commission on VASAP, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 18.2-271.2; to members of the Board on Veterans' Affairs, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 2.1-741; to members of the Council on Indians, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 9-138.1; to members of the Board of Trustees of the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, who shall be appointed as provided in § 23-231.3; to members of the Maternal and Child Health Council, who shall be appointed as provided for in § 9-312; ~~or~~ to members of the Virginia Interagency Coordinating Council who shall be appointed as provided in § 2.1-750; or to members of the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council, who shall be appointed as provided in § 2.1-116.18

2. That the provisions of this act shall expire on July 1, 1995.